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THE

M. Plumer

HISTORY

OF THE

Kentish

PETITION.

London, Printed in the Year, 1701.



THE PREFACE.

TWou'd be hard to suspect him of Errors in Fact, who writes the Story of Yesterday: A Historian of three Weeks must certainly be just, for had he never so much mind to Lye, 'twou'd be Nonsense to expect the World cou'd be impos'd upon, every Bodies Memory would be a living Witness against him, and the Effect wou'd be only to expose himself.

Authors of Histories generally Appollogize for their Quotations, plead that Industry in the search after Truth, and excuse themselves by asserting their Faithfulness of their Collections. The Author of the following Sheets is not afraid to let the World know, that he is so sure every thing related in this Account is Litterally and Positively true, that he challenges all the Wit and Malice the world abounds with, to confute the most trifling Circumstance.

If Aggravations are omitted, and some very ill natur'd passages let go without Observations, those Persons who were guilty of them, may observe that we have more good Nature than they have Manners; and they Ought to acknowledge it, since a great many Rudenesses both against the King Himself and the Gentle-

THE PREFACE.

Gentlemen concern'd have scap'd their scurrilous Mouth, which are not here animadverted upon.

And least the World should think this Presumptive, and that the Accusation is only a surmise, we will Query what they think of that kind Remark of Mr. J. H---w, finding the King's Letter to the House, and the Kentish Petition to come both on a Day, and the substance to be the same, That the King, the Dutch, and the Kentish Men, were all in a Plot against the House of Commons.

I could have swell'd this Pamphlet to a large Volume, if I shou'd pretend to Collect all the Bellingsgate Language of a certain House full of Men, against the King, the Lords, and the Gentlemen of Kent; but 'tis a fitter subject for a Satyr than a History, they have abus'd the Nation, and Now are become a Banter to themselves; and I leave them to consider of it, and reform,

I assure the World, I am no Kentish Man, nor was my Hand to the Petition: Tho' had I been acquainted with it, I would have gone a Hundred Miles to ha' sign'd it, and a Hundred more to have had the Opportunity of serving my Country at the Expence of an Unjust Confinement for it.

It may be fairly concluded I am no Warwickshire Man neither, with a Petition in my Pocket, brought a Hundred Miles, and afraid to deliver it.

*Nor my Name Sir Robert Clayton, by which you may know that I did not promise the Members, who
were*

THE PREFACE.

were then in fear enough, to use my Interest to stifle a City Petition.

Nor is my Name Legion, I wish it were, for I shou'd ha' been glad to be capable of speaking so much Truth, and so much to the purpose, as is contain'd in in that Unanswerable Paper.

But I am an unconcern'd Spectator, and have been an exact observer of every passage, have been an Eye and Ear Witness of every most Minute Article, and am sure that every thing related is as Exactly True, as the Causes of it all are Scandalous and Burthen-some to the Nation.

As to the Gentlemen of the House of Commons, I shall not pretend to enter into their Character, because I care not to enter into Captivity, nor come into the Clutches of that worst of Brutes their Sergeant.

Litterally speaking, no Member of the House of Commons can be a Jacobite, because they have taken the Oaths to King William. But this may be observed, that the Jacobites in England are generally the Only People who approve of their Proceedings, and appland their Measures; and 'tis observable that at Paris, and St. Germans, the general Complement of a Health in all English Company is a la Sante Monsieur Jack-How; the truth of which there are not a few very good Gentlemen in Town can attest, from whence I think I may draw this Observation, that either he is a Jacobite, or the Jacobites are a very good Natur'd people.

The PREFACE.

Noscitur ex socio qui non Dignoscitur ex se.

The following Sheets contain an exact History of the Kentish Petition, and of the Treatment the Gentlemen who presented it, met with both from the House, the Sergeant, and at last from their Country.

The best way to come to a Conclusion, whether the Gentlemen Petitioners were well or ill us'd, is to review the Matter of Fact, all Panegyricks, and Encomiums, come short of the Natural Reflections which flow from a true Account of that Proceeding, and the whole is Collected in this form, that all the World may judge by a true light, and not be Impos'd upon, by Partial and Imperfect Relations.

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THE
HISTORY
OF THE
Kentish Petition.

ON the 29th of *April*, 1701. the Quarter-Sessions for the County of *Kent*, began at *Maidstone*, where *William Culpeper* of *Hollingbourn*, Esq; was chosen Chair-Man, tho' he was then absent, and with an unusual Respect the Bench of Justices proceeded to do Business, and kept the Chair for him, for several Hours, till he came.

The People of the County of *Kent*, as well as in most parts of the Kingdom, had express'd great Dissatisfaction at the slow proceedings of the Parliament; and that the King was not assisted, nor the *Protestants* abroad considered; and the Country People began to say to one another in their Language, *That they had sow'd their Corn, and the French were a coming to Reap it*: And from hence it is allow'd to proceed, that during the sitting of the Session, several of the principal Freeholders of the County applied themselves to the Chair-Man aforesaid, and told him, It was their Desire that the Bench would consider of making some Application to the Parliament, to acquaint them of the Apprehensions of the People.

The Chair-Man reply'd, It was the proper work of the Grand-Jury, to present the Grievances of the Country,

try, and therefore he referr'd them to the said Grand-Jury who were then sitting.

The Grand Jury being applyed to, accepted the Proposal, and addreſſing to the ſaid Mr. *Culpeper*, the Chair-man acquainting him that they had approv'd of ſuch a Motion made as before, and deſir'd that the Bench would joyn with them; the Chair-man told them he would acquaint the Juſtices of it, which he did, and they immediately approv'd of it alſo, and deſired the ſaid *William Culpeper* Eſq; their Chair-man, to draw a Petition.

Mr. *Culpeper* withdrew to Compoſe it, and having drawn a Petition, it was read, and approved, and immediately ordered to be carried to the Grand-Jury, being Twenty One in Number, who all Unanimouſly ſign'd it, and brought it into Court, deſiring all the Gentlemen on the Bench would do the ſame; whereupon the Chair-man and three and twenty of the Juſtices ſign'd it, and the Freeholders of the County crouded in ſo faſt, that the Parchment was filled up in leſs than five Hours time; and many Thouſands of Hands might have been had to it, if the Juſtices had not declin'd it, reſuſing to add any more Rolls of Parchment, as inſiſting more upon the Merits of the Petition, than the Number of Subſcribers.

By all which it appears how fooliſh and groundleſs their Pretences are, who would ſuggeſt, that the Petition was a private thing, tranſacted by a few People; whereas 'tis plain 'twas the Act and Deed of the whole Country.

The Words of the Petition are as follows.

To

To the Knights, Citizens, and Bur- gesses in Parliament assembled.

The Humble Petition of the Gentlemen, Justices of the Peace, Grand-Jury, and other Freeholders, at the General Quarter-Sessions of the Peace holden at Maidstone, the 29th of April, in the thirteenth Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord King William III. over England, &c.

‘ **W**E the Gentlemen, Justices of the Peace, Grand-
‘ Jury, and other Freeholders, at the General
‘ Quarter-Sessions at Maidstone in Kent, deeply Concern’d
‘ at the Dangerous Estate of this Kingdom, and of all
‘ Europe; and considering that the Fate of Us and Our
‘ Posterity depends upon the Wisdom of Our Represen-
‘ tatives in Parliament, think Our Selves bound in Duty
‘ Humbly to lay before this Honourable House the Con-
‘ sequences in this Conjunction of Your Speedy Resolu-
‘ tion, and most Sincere Endeavour to Answer the Great
‘ Trust Reposed in You by Your Country.

‘ And in regard that from the Experience of all Ages it
‘ is manifest, no Nation can be Great or Happy without
‘ Union, We hope that no Pretence whatsoever shall be
‘ able to Create a Misunderstanding among Our Selves, or
‘ the least Distrust of His Majesty, Whose Great Actions
‘ for this Nation are writ in the Hearts of His Subjects,
‘ and can never, without the blackest Ingratitude, be
‘ forgot.

‘ We most Humbly Implore this Honourable House
‘ to have Regard to the Voice of the People, that Our Re-
‘ ligion and Safety may be Effectually Provided for, that
‘ Your Loyal Addresses may be turned into Bills of Supply,
‘ B and,

‘ and that His Most Sacred Majesty, (whose Propitious
 ‘ and Unblemish’d Reign Over Us We pray God long to
 ‘ to continue) may be Enabled Powerfully to Assist His
 ‘ Allies before it be too late.

And Your Petitioners shall every Pray, &c.

*Signed by all the Deputy-Lieutenants
 there Present, above Twenty Ju-
 stices of the Peace, all the Grand
 Jury, and other Freeholders, then
 there.*

As soon as the Petition was Sign’d, and there was no more room for any Hands, it was deliver’d by the Grand-Jury to the aforesaid *William Culpeper* Esq; Chair-man of the Session, and he was desir’d to present it in their Names to the Parliament, which at their request he promised to do, and the rest of the Gentlemen, viz. *Thomas Culpeper* Esq; *Justinian Champney* Esq; *David Pollhill* Esq; and *William Hamilton* Esq; offered themselves to go with him.

On *Tuesday* the 6th of *May*, they came to Town with the Petition, and the next day they went up to the House, and applyed themselves to Sir *Thomas Hales*, in order to desire him to present it to the House; he being one of the Representatives of the County of *Kent*; Sir *Thomas* read the Petition, and telling them it was too late to present it that day, it being after 12 a Clock; desir’d they wou’d let him show it Mr. *Pellham* of *Sussex*, and Mr. *Culpeper* told him he was willing enough Mr. *Pellham* shou’d see the Petition, not doubting he wou’d be a Friend to it, but that he was unwilling to part with it, being entrusted with it by his Country, adding, *That he should make but an Indifferent Figure in the County, if the Petition should be got out of his Hands and lost.* Whereupon
 Sir

Sir *Thomas Hales*, past his Word, and Honour, that he would not show it to any Person whatever, but to Mr. *Pellham*, and that he would return it to them immediately. But this Word and Honour so solemnly engag'd, was as easily forgotten: For having got the Petition, he carried it into the House, where he stay'd an hour and half, and then returning, he gave it to the Gentlemen; and told them he had shown it to Sir *Edward Seymour* and several others.

This Perfidious Account to that very part of the Nation which he represented, deserves some special Notice, and there is no question but the People will remember it for him, and show their Resentment on proper occasions.

Mr. *Culpeper* in the Name of the rest, gave him an Answer suitable to the account, and sufficient to let him know their Surprise at so Ungentleman-like Usage, viz. *That he had broke his Word, and served his Country very ill.* But this being neither place, nor season for further Debates, he appointed to meet them in the Evening, and then after making them wait two Hours, beyond his time, he adjourn'd them till next Morning in the Court of Request, where he told them absolutely, *That he wou'd not deliver the Petition.*

Here it is very observable, that at the very time Sir *Thomas Hales* came out of the House, and return'd the Petition in the manner abovemention'd, Mr. *Meredith* the other Representative for the County, came to them, and told them that their Petition had been expos'd in the House, and that Mr. *How* was then making a Speech against it.

The Gentlemen finding themselves thus betrayed by Sir *Thomas Hales*, consulted together, about finding another more proper Person to deliver the Petition, and resolv'd to apply themselves to Mr. *Meredith*, the other

Member for the County of *Kent*, and Mr. *Meredith* having agreed to Deliver it, in case Sir *Thomas Hales* should refuse, had appointed to meet them, with several other Gentlemen Members of the House, in order to consult about the matter of the Petition, and the manner of delivering it.

In the Morning the House being met, Mr. *Meredith* came out and told them, The House was in such a Ferment, that none of the Gentlemen durst appear for it, nor come to them, and he doubted would not venture so much as to speak a Word in the House for the Petition.

Nor were these all the Discouragements the Gentlemen met with in their Presenting the Petition, but several Members of the House pretending respect, and others that were really their Friends, and in concern for them, came out of the House to them, and endeavour'd to persuade them not to expose themselves to the fury of the House, by delivering the Petition, telling them that Mr. *How* in particular, had said, *That if there were One Hundred Thousand Hands to the Petition, they should be all made Examples of.* And Sir *Edward Seymour* added, *That the whole County should be Double Tax'd, and the Estates of those who presented it, be Confiscated to the use of the War.*

Altho' these Menaces, together with the almost Omnipotent Power of the House of Commons, had Circumstances enough in them to shake the Resolution of a whole County, yet they had not the Effects here which was expected, for the Gentlemen far from being terrified at all this, unanimously declar'd their Resolution to discharge the Trust plac'd in them by their Country, and to present it to the House; and Mr. *William Colepeper* in particular alluding to the Words of Luther, to those who dissuaded him from going to the City of Worms, told them, *That if*
every

every Tile upon the Chappel of Saint * Stephen's was a Devil, he would present the Petition. And all of them declar'd, That if none of the Gentlemen wou'd do their Country so much service as to present their Grievances to the Parliament in a Legal Petition, they wou'd knock at the Door of the House and deliver it themselves. Mr. Meredith finding the Gentlemen so resolute, did consent to carry in the Petition, which he perform'd with great Discretion and Fidelity.

* The House that the Commons sit in, was formerly Saint Stephen's Chappel.

The Petition being thus delivered, the Gentlemen attended, for Mr. Speaker further to Intimidate them, had let fall some Speeches, that *It was the usage of the House when a Petition was brought in, the Persons who presented it, ought to be ready without to justify the matter of their Petition.* And the Gentlemen seeing no reason to be ashamed of theirs, in particular, resolv'd to abide the utmost which their and the Nation's Enemies could do to them.

Having waited about half an Hour, they were call'd in to the Bar of the House, where Mr. Speaker *Treating them in his usual haughty Tone.* This short Dialogue pass'd between them.

Speaker. Gentlemen, is this your Petition ?

Holding up the Petition by one Corner.

Gentlemen. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Bowing very Respectively.

Speaker. And Gentlemen, you own this Petition ?

Gent.

Gent. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker. And Gentlemen, your Hands are to this Petition?

Gent. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker. Carry it to them, and see
Turning to one of the Clerks. if they will own their Hands.
 [Which they severally did.]

Speaker. Withdraw, and expect the Order of the House.

Whereupon they withdrew, and attended in the Lobby, and now began the second Attack upon their Resolutions for the Members, who came out represented with all the Terror imaginable the Fury of the House; Imprisonment and the Ruine of their Fortunes and Families was the least they had to expect; Impeachments, Laws Ex post Facto, tacking them to Money-Bills, and all the Arbitrary Methods, which any Arbitrary Parliament have ever made use of to Ruine those who have felt their Magnificent Indignation, were laid before them. When some who pretended Pity for the Misfortune of so many worthy Gentlemen came out of the House, and told them they had yet a Lucky Moment left them, by an immediate submission, to fly to the Clemency of the House, that they were sent out by Sir Edward Seymour, and the rest of the Gentlemen on that side, to let them know that Mr. How was now speaking,
 and

and would continue so for some time, to give them opportunity to recollect themselves, and by a timely acknowledgment to save themselves from Ruine.

The Gentlemen being at a loss to know in what particular they could have given the House such Offence, and being well assur'd they were in the protection of the Law, and had not acted any thing but what the known Constitution of the Realm expressly allow'd, remain'd still unshaken, and boldly replyed, *They had no nothing to say but what was in their Petition.*

But being further press'd by Sir *Theophilus Oglethorp*, and several other Gentlemen; and because they wou'd not shew any Disrespect to the House, or seem to flight their Displeasure, they consider'd of an Answer to be given to the proposal of Submission.

And because whatever Answer they gave, might be misrepresented to the House, delivered by Word of Mouth, they resolved to put it into Writing, and having consulted a while, they agreed to send in this Civil Answer.

*'We are Humbly of Opinion, that
' it is our Right to Petition this Ho-
' nourable House according to the Sta-
' tute of 13 Car. 2. As to the matter
' of Our Petition, We declare that we
' Intend Nothing Offensive to this Ho-
' nourable House.*

This Writing being shown to Sir *Theophilus Ogletborp*, and several other Members, they began to smile; and imagin'd their Point gain'd, and told the Gentlemen they were glad they began to be sensible of their Danger; and if they would but add one Word more, *viz.* that they were sorry for what they had done, they would undertake for the Clemency of the House: This they unanimously refus'd, one of the Gentlemen with some heat, replying, *We will have no Sorry.* Here the Members (or Conspirators rather) would have had them put it, That they did it through Inadvertency. This they also refus'd, declaring they did it at the Request of their Country, maturely, and deliberately, were justified in doing it by the Laws of the Land, and they would never recede from it. So they delivered the Paper to Sir *Thomas Hales*, but whether he delivered it to the House or no, he never had the Civility to inform them.

The Debate in the House held five Hours, after which Notice was given them by the Messengers, that the House had voted the Petition Scandalous, Insolent, and Seditious, *vid.* the Votes, *tending to destroy, &c.* and ordered them to be taken into Custody for the same; upon which the Gentlemen went, and immediately surrendered themselves to the Sergeant, tho' the Warrant was not made out for some Hours after.

The Sergeant only asked them where he should come to them at Dinner, which was agreed to be at the *Castle-Tavern* in *Fleet-street*, where they Din'd, on *Thursday*, *Friday*, and *Saturday*, and were hitherto very civilly treated by his Officers; and accompanied by great Numbers of Citizens and Gentlemen of the first Quality, and not a few of the Nobility; the Officers were seldom with them, went of Errands for them, and oftentimes were all absent together; so that there was no colour of Reason for the Sergeant to say, he fear'd a Rescue, for
they

they had all the Opportunities they could desire, if they had had the least design to escape, and 'twas never heard of that they who cou'd escape when they pleas'd, would expose their Friends to the hazard of a Rescue.

On Friday in the Evening, Mr. Sergeant began to treat with them and representing his absolute Power, letting them know, *That he had an Unbounded liberty of using them at Discretion, that he could confine them at pleasure, put them into Dungeons, lay them under Ground, keep them apart, remove them daily, and keep all People from them, by making them close Prisoners.* He thereby gave them to understand, that he expected a Consideration suitable to his Civility; upon this the Gentlemen offered him One Hundred Guineas, half in Hand, and the other when they shou'd be Discharg'd, tho' it should be next day: The Sergeant neither accepted nor refus'd the offer, nor express'd any dislike, as if he thought it too little, but appointed to come to them the next day.

Saturday in the Evening Mr. Thomas Colepeper, having notice that his Lady was very much frighted at his Confinement, desir'd leave of the Messenger, in whose Custody he was, to let him go down to Maidstone, upon his parole to return by Monday Night; which the Messenger tacitly granted.

The rest of the Gentlemen being met at the Tavern, expecting the Sergeant according to appointment, and having waited till Ten a Clock, instead of coming himself, he sends Orders to the Messengers to seperate the Gentlemen, and confine them in several Prisons, that very Night: which Order the Officers executed as rudely as the Sergeant could desire, saving that they obtained the Civility from the Officers to be confined two in one place, and two in another, but were hurried away with such Unmannerly Indecency, that they would not permit them to send for their Night-Gowns, and Necessaries.

In this manner Mr. *William Colepeper*, and Mr. *Justinian Champneys* were carried to *Myat's House* the Messenger in *Fox-Court* in *Holborn*, where they had this hard Choice proposed to them at their Entrance, whether they would Lodge in the Cellar, or in the Garret; and choosing the latter, they were thrust into a little Hole, on top of the House, where they had all the Inconveniencies of a nasty Prison, as *base Lodging*, *foul Sheets*, *little Covering*, and a *Cold Room*; by which means they both took such Cold, as they have not yet recovered.

But Mr. Sergeant, *lest they should not be treated ill enough*, coming the next Morning to Mr. *Myat's House*, was in a great rage at him, and drawing his Sword, cut him over the Head, for *using the Gentlemen so civilly*, as he call'd it: Afterwards coming up into the Garret where Mr. *Colepeper* and Mr. *Justinian Champneys* were lodg'd, they ask'd him, What Order he had for using them thus? He replyed, He had an Order from those who committed them. Being ask'd again, If there was any such Vote past in the House? He said No, but he had an Order. Mr. *Colepeper* replyed, *If it be not a Vote of the House, pray how is it an Order? Have the Majority of the House, one by one, come to you and given you Direction to use us thus barbarously?* He replyed, Yes, they had. For which scandalous Reflection, if False, his Masters the Members of the House of Commons, are exceedingly oblig'd to him. Mr. *Colepeper* told him, *He believ'd he shou'd live to see him Hang'd*: And so they parted.

All this while Mr. *Polhill* and Mr. *Hamilton* were put into a Cellar, without the favour of having their choice, and had so vile a Lodging, that they could scarce breath; and was likewise in their turn *Bullyed* by Mr. Sergeant the next day; and when they ask'd him to show them the Copy of their Commitment, he denyed it; Mr. *Polhill* in particular replyed, They askt him nothing but
what

what by Law he ought to grant: He rudely replyed, *He cared not a Far for them nor the Law neither.* And so left them; which Refusal of his he may hear of again perhaps in a way of Legal Application.

On *Tuesday* he gave the House notice, that the younger Mr. Colepeper had made his escape, *tho' he had a Letter from him that he wou'd be in Town that very Day*; and at the same time he made a Complaint that the other Gentlemen behaved themselves so disorderly, that he apprehended a Rescue; tho' the Gentlemen, to avoid any suspicion, had voluntarily surrendred their Swords to the Messengers, without being required so to do.

This complaint to the House was the Gentlemen's Deliverance, and the Sergeant's disappointment, tho' not in kindness to them neither, for ordering them to the *Gatehouse*, as a more Ignominious Confinement, the Sergeant lost the Extravagant Fees which he design'd to Extort from them; and the Humanity of Captain *Taylor*, the Keeper of the *Gatehouse*, made their restraint easie to them: For this Keeper us'd them like Gentlemen, and the Reputation he has obtain'd by his Civility, will be as Lasting as the Infamy of the *Sergeant*, the one leaves a grateful Acknowledgement in the Mouths of all Men, and will always be spoken of to his Advantage; and the other *Nautious like the Person*, is dishonourable both to his Memory, and to the House that imploy'd him.

On *Wednesday*, *Thomas Colepeper Esq;* the younger Brother, who had been in *Kent*, and who was just come up, according to his promise, rendred himself to the *Speaker*, and desired to be sent to his Brethren; Mr. *Sergeant* who thought to make himself amends upon him, laboured to have him continued in his Custody, and had not that Party in the House thought the *Gatehouse* a greater punishment, possibly it had been so. *But therein that Infallible House were deceiv'd*, and he was deliver'd from the Hands of a Villain, by his Enemies themselves,

who thought they had mortified him the more, to the infinite regret of the Sergeant, and the general satisfaction of his fellow Sufferers.

The same Morning that Mr. *Colepeper* surrendred himself, *The Legion Paper*, as 'twas called, was sent to the House, 'twas said it was delivered the Speaker by a Woman, but I have been inform'd since, that it was a mistake, and that 'twas delivered by the very Person who wrote it, guarded with about Sixteen Gentlemen of Quality, who if any notice had been taken of him, were ready to have carried him off by Force; / 'twas reported, that Mr. *Thomas Colepeper* brought it out of *Kent*, and that all the County were at his Heels to make it good, tho' it was really no such thing, and that Gentleman declar'd he knew nothing at all of it.

But be it as it will, that Paper struck such a Terror into the Party in the House, that from that time there was not a Word ever spoken in the House, of proceeding against the *Kentish* Petitioners, and the Members of that party began to drop off, and get into the Country, for their Management began to be so disliked over the whole Nation, that their own Fears dictated to them they had run things too far.

The Clashings with the upper House about the Tryal of the Four Peers they had Impeach'd, and the miserable shifts they were driven to by the Lords, to avoid Trying them, serv'd but to make them more uneasie, and to hasten the dispatch of the Money-Bills, in order to the Prorogation, which was on the 23d. of *June*, 1701.

By the Prorogation, the *Kentish* Gentlemen were discharg'd, but to show their respect to the Civility of Captain *Taylor* their Keeper, they continued to Lodge with him, till they went into the Country.

The First Honour done them on account of their Sufferings, was their being invited to a Noble Entertainment at *Mercers-Hall* in *Cheapside*, at the Charge of the Citizens of *London*, where above Two Hundred Gentlemen din'd with them, together with several Noble Lords and Members of Parliament.

Thursday the 2d of *July*, they set out for *Kent*, the Citizens had offered to accompany them out of Town, but they declin'd it, desiring to go privately.

And those who pretend to charge them with affecting Popularity, would do well to remember, that they were fain to send their Coaches empty out of Town, and go by Water to meet them, to avoid the Respect which the Citizens would have shown them.

But there was no shunning the Appearance of the Country, who shew'd their value for the Gentlemen, and the Cause for which they had suffered in all the possible terms of Respect and Affection.

The first Instance of this was at *Black-Heath*, where Mr. *David Pollhill*, one of the Gentlemen, was to separate from the rest, his Road lying near *Brouley* to his House at *Otford* in *Kent*. He was met at *Black-Heath* by above 500 Horse, who receiv'd him into the midst of them, and surrouded his Coach with such Shouts, and Joy, as sufficiently testified their Respect for him, and their Satisfaction at his Return among them: Nor can I omit that having to satisfy my Curiosity, drank among and discours'd with some of that Party, while they were waiting for Mr. *Pollhill*: I never heard of any Gentleman more universally beloved by the Country, or more particularly distinguish'd for Modesty and Temper; and I believe I may affirm that 'twou'd be hard to find any Gentleman so near the City of *London*, who could have

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had

had such an appearance, of his own Tenants and Neighbours, to Congratulate his Deliverance.

Mr. *Polhill* being come to the Corner of the Park-Wall on *Black-Heath*, stopt to take his leave of his Brethren, and giving them a Loud Huzza, wisht them a good Journey, and proceeded to *Ottford*.

All possible Demonstrations of Joy concluded the Day, and it has not been known that the Country ever express'd more Satisfaction since the Coronation of King *William*, than at the return of this Gentleman.

The rest of the Gentlemen proceeded to *Rocheſter*, where they were met by such a Body of Horse, that the principal Inns of the Town could not entertain them, some of whom had come 20 Miles to meet them.

The Mayor of *Rocheſter* Paid his Respect to them, and complain'd that he had no notice given him of their coming, otherwise he would have met them out of Town with a good Body of Horse.

Here they rested to refresh themselves and Horses, and about 6 a Clock set forward for *Maidstone*; the People of *Maidstone*, tho' it was Market-day, could not have patience to wait at the place where they generally go to meet the Judges, but a great many Horse-men met them on the Downs, and the top of *Boxley-hill* 4 Miles from the Town.

At *Sandlin* about 2 Miles from the Town, the Gentlemen of the Neighbourhood met them with their Coaches, and an Innumerable Multitude of People on Horse-back, and on Foot, shouting and bidding them welcome.

After a short stay here, to receive the Complements of the Gentlemen, they proceeded (the Gentlemen's Coaches falling into the Rear) to the Park, the Seat of the *Lady Taylor*, who is Married to Mr. *Thomas Colepeper*, where they were welcom'd by the said *Lady Taylor*, the *Old Lady Colepeper* the Mother of the Gentlemen, and several Ladies of Quality, the People shouting all the while, *A Colepeper, a Colepeper*, and the Poor strowing the Ways with Greens and Flowers; and thus they proceeded into the

the Town, with such Universal Acclamations of the People; as the like was never seen in that Country since the Restoration of King *Charles* the Second.

The Night concluded with a great Bonfire, and the Healths of all the Gentlemen drank round it, to the great Mortification of the *Jacobites*, of whom there are but very few in those parts; and to the general Satisfaction of the Country.

Nor was this the only appearance, for at *Beartsted*, about three Miles further, the Country was assembled, the Bells rung, and several Hundreds of the People continued together all Night, with Extraordinary Joy, expecting that the Elder Mr. *Colepeper*, Mr. *Champneys*, and Mr. *Hamilton*, would have continued their Journey to *Holingbourn*, the antient Seat of the Family of the *Colepepers*; But the Extraordinary Reception they found at *Maidstone*, had detain'd them so long, that 'twas too late to go on; so they lay at *Maidstone* that Night, and the next day abundance of Gentlemen and Country People, came particularly to pay their Respects to them, and bid them welcome into the Country.

And at the time of the Assizes lately held at *Maidstone*, the Grand-Jury consisting of very eminent Gentlemen and Freeholders of the County, whereof 12 were Justices of the Peace, went in a Body to the Gentlemen, and publickly gave them Thanks for their Fidelity to the Country, in Delivering their Petition to the Parliament.

In all these Expressions of the Country's Joy at the return of these honest Gentlemen, it might be enquired, what they said of the Parliament? because 'tis so natural to Curse with one Hand, when we Bless with the other, that it might be rationally expected; 'tis true, the Country being justly disoblig'd at the ill usage of these Gentlemen, did not spare their Reflections, but I choose to pass it over, because 'tis not Parliaments in general, but the *Conspirators* and *Jacobite Party* in a Parliament, that are at present the Nations burthen, and from whom she groans to be redeem'd.

THE CONCLUSION.

HAD this Nation listend to the Calls of their own Reason, and to the Voice of things, all this Confusion of Councils had been prevented; had the People of *England* chosen Men of Honesty, and of Peaceable Principles, Men of Candor, disengaged from Interest and Design, that had nothing before them but the Benefit of their Country, the Safety of Religion, and the Interest of *Europe*, all this had been avoided; they would never have Imprison'd Five Honest Gentlemen for coming to them with the Sence of their Country in a peaceable Petition: they would never have had the occasion to repent of their refusing to hearken to the Voice of the People: But it is too late to look back, the Nation has had the misfortune to choose them, and our Peace, and Liberty, and the *Protestant* Interest in *Europe* is too much in their Hands.

All the Advice I can pretend to give my fellow Slaves, and Country-men, is that they would not be backward to let the Gentlemen know, that the Nation is sensible they are not doing their Duty; and withal, that to Impose upon the Rights and Liberties of the *English* Nation, has always been fatal to the Persons of those who have attempted it, and their Examples stand as Bouys and Marks to warn Posterity of the hidden Dangers which others have fallen into.

It has been fatal to *Favorites*, to *Judges*, to *Lords*, and to *Kings*, and will certainly be so even to *Parliaments*, if they Descend to Abuse the *People* they represent.

The Imprisoning these Five Gentlemen, had neither Reason, Law, Pretence, nor Policy in it.

It had no Reason in it, because they had offended against no Law, either of Reason, or the Nature of the thing.

It had no Law in it, because they had no Legal Power to commit any but their own Members.

And I am of the opinion, they are Convic'd there was no Policy in it, for there is seldom much Policy in doing that publickly, which we know we shall be asham'd of.

The not proceeding against them afterward, shewed they were either asham'd or afraid; had they been in the Right, there could be no Reason to fear; and if in the Wrong, they had all the Reason in the world to be asham'd.

To commit Five Gentlemen to Custody, for Petitioning them to do what they really knew they ought to have done, 'twas the most preposterous thing in Nature: *To punish for Humbly Petitioning!* 'tis Nonsense in it self. God himself permits the Meanest and most Despicable of his Creatures to remind him, *as we may say*, of their Wants, and

Petition for his Aid: The most Contemptible Beggar is permitted to be Importunate for Relief, and tho' the Law is against him, we are not affronted at it. But to resent the Representation of their Country, and Imprison Gentlemen who at the Request of the Freeholders of a County came under the express protection of an Act of Parliament to deliver a Petition! 'twas the most Ridiculous Inconsistent Action that ever Parliament of *England* was guilty of; and with submission, I think the best Action the same House can do at their next Meeting, is to Vote that it should be Raz'd out of their Journals, and never be made a President for the time to come; upon which condition, and no other, the Nation ought to forgive it them.

The Act of the 13 *Carol.* 2. to assert the Right of the Subjects Petitioning, is a sufficient Authority for any one to quote, and those that pretend to call this an Illegal Act, must first trample down the Authority of that Act of Parliament.

Let this Act justify me, in saying, that to Imprison *English men* for Petitioning, is Illegal, and a Dishonour to *English* Parliaments, *Leigion Article* the

But say the Lame Excusers of this Excentrick Motion of the House, this was a Factious thing contriv'd by a few private Insignificant People of no value, and the Matter of it is Saucy and Impertinent.

First, had it been a Petition of the meanest and most inconsiderable Person in *England*, and that single by himself, provided he were a Freeholder of *England*,

England, he had a Legal Right to speak his mind, for that same Reason from whence the Commons in Parliament claim a Freedom of Speech, gives every Commoner a freedom to Speak to the House, since every Freeholder has an equal concern in their Debates, and equal power in deputeing them to sit there. But because this Right unlimited, might be tumultuous and uneasy, therefore the Method how he shall do it, is circumscrib'd for Decency-sake, that it shall be done by Petition, and that Petition shall be presented *so* and *so*, and by such a Number, and no more: but that it should not be lawful to Petition, no Tribunal, no Court, no Collective or Representative Body of Men in the World ever refused it; nay, the *Inquisition* of *Spain* does not forbid it, the *Divan* of the *Turks* allows it, and I believe if *Sathan* himself kept his Court in publick, he would not prohibit it.

But besides this, the Fact is not true: As for it being contriv'd by a few People, let the Impartial Relation here given, Answer that Ridiculous Untruth, unless you will account the County of *Kent* a Few for certainly 11 parts of 12 in the whole County, and now of the whole Kingdom approve of it.

Nor has the Reproach upon the Persons, presenting it, more of truth, unless Gentlemen of Antient and Illustrious Families, whose Ancestors have been known for several Ages to be Men of Honour and Estates, ally'd to several of the Nobility, and now known and valued by the whole County, both

for their considerable Fortunes, as well as Personal Merit, unless I say such Men are to be accounted private and inconsiderable, the Charge cannot be true : To such I shall only say, that the Ancesters of these Gentlemen were Members of Antient Parliaments, and of such Parliaments as would have been ashamed of committing such an Absurdity as to Imprison the Freeholders of *England* for a peaceable Petition.

As to the Matter of the Petition, and which some People say was a Banter, the turning their Loyal Addresses into Bills of Supply. The Gentlemen ought to have had liberty to explain themselves, which if they had done, I am of the opinion that it would have been to this purpose, that they thought it was proper *the House should speedily supply the KING so with Money, as that he might be Enabled to Defend our Protestant Neighbours from the Encroachments of France*; and not to lose their time in addressing the King in matters of less moment.

I shall conclude with this short Animadversion by way of Remark, and let all Men judge of the justness of the Observation.

That as this was the First Time that ever the English Nation Petitioned to be Tax'd: So this was the first Parliament that ever address'd the King to take care of himself, and defend himself against his People.

A D D E N D A.

SOME Book-learn'd Fools pretend to find a Flaw,
 In our late Senate Votes for want of Law,
 And Insolently say the Men of *Kent*
 Were Rudely handled by the Parliament.
 Knowledge of things would teach them every Hour,
That Law is but an Heathen Word for Power.
 Might, Right, Force, Justice, Equitie,
 Are terms Synonimous, and must agree;
 For who shall e'er the Argument confute,
Where Power prevails, and no Man dare dispute.

Nature has left this Tincture in the Blood,
 That all Men wou'd be Tyrants if they cou'd,
 Not Kings alone, not Ecclesiastick pride,
 But *Parliaments*, and all Mankind beside.
 All Men, like *Phaeton*, would Command the Reins,
 'Tis only want of Power that restrains.
 Then why should we think strange the Parliament
 The Peoples late Petitions shou'd resent :
'Tis fatal to Tyrannick Power, when they
Who shou'd be Ruin'd, grumble to obey:
 And Tyrants never can compleat their Reign,
 So long as Injur'd Subjects dare complain;
 If they do not *their first Address* withstand,
 What now they supplicate, they'l soon command;

By

By first suppressing early Discontent,
 They aim'd the Consequences to prevent,
 For well they knew that shou'd the Nation try,
To ask once more, they durst not twice deny.

England has this one Fate peculiar to her,
 never to want a Party to undo her,
 The *Court*, the *Kings*, the *Church*, the *Parliaments*,
 Alternat'ly pursue the same Intent,
 Under the specious term of Liberty,
 The passive Injur'd People to betray :
 And it has always been the Peoples Fate,
 To see their own Mistakes when 'twas too late,
 Senceless of Danger, sleepy and secure,
 Till their Distempers grew too strong to cure,
 Till they're embrac'd by the approaching Grave,
 And none but *Jove* and Miracles can save.

In vain bold Hero's venture to redeem
 A People willinger to sink than swim :
 If there's a *Brutus* in the Nation found,
 That dares *Patritian Usurpation* wound,
 He's sure to find an Ignominious Grave,
And perish by the People he would save.

Such are by Vertue signaliz'd in vain,
 We'll own the Merit, but abuse the Men.

Marius

arius sav'd *Rome*, and was by *Rome* despis'd;
And many a *Russell* we have sacrific'd.
Then who for *English* Freedom would appear,
Where Lives of Patriots are never dear,
And Streams of Generous Blood flow unregarded
(there.

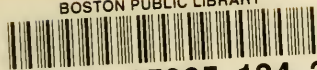
Posterity will be asham'd to own
The Actions we their Ancestors have done,
When they for Antient Presidents enquire,
And to the Journals of this Age retire,
To see one Tyrant banish'd from his Home,
To set Five Hundred Traytors in his Room.
They'l Blush to find the Head beneath the Tail,
And representing, Treachery prevail:
They'l be amaz'd to see there was *but Five*,
Whose Courage could their Liberty survive,
While we that durst Illegal Power dethrone,
Should basely be Enslav'd by Tyrants of our own.

F I N I S.

ERRATA.

IN all places where 'tis printed *Culpeper*, read *Colepeper*.
In the *Preface*, pag. 1. line 9. for *that* read *their*. Line
10 for *their* read *the*. pag. 2. line 2. for *Mouth* read *Mouths*.
In the Book pag. 2 line 5 for *acquainting* read *acquainted*.
pag. 4 line 17 for *Champney* read *Champneys*. pag. 5 line
10. for *account* read *action*, line 15 for *account* read *action*.
pag. 6 line 13 for *discouragement* read *discouragements*.
pag. 8 line 18 for *Magnificent* read *Magnipotent*. pag. 10
line 18 for *after* read *after which*. Ditto line 21 for *Viz*
read *Vide*.

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